

Mountain State Sierran

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Legislature Adjourns After Most Dismal Session in Years

Jim Kotcon

In spite of citizen demands for action on Marcellus, energy efficiency, and a host of other issues, the 2013 session of the WV Legislature can only be described as one of the most anti-environmental in years.

A Few Low-Lights

HB 2579 weakens water quality standards for selenium, delaying efforts to clean up selenium pollution in coal mining. The bill passed the WV House of Delegates 99-0 and passed the Senate 34-0. Selenium is an essential nutrient in low amounts, but too much means deformed fish and threats to aquatic life.

SB 185 proposed by Governor Tomblin eliminates the vehicle tax credit for cars powered by biofuels, electricity, and even for "coal-derived" fuels. The only cars eligible will be those powered by natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas. In a time when we need to reduce our carbon footprint, Tomblin asks that we subsidize fossil fuels.

SB 245 became **SB 243**, the Horizontal Well Control Act rule. This became one of the hottest issues in the session, as Halliburton (Yes, That Halliburton) convinced WV-DEP to agree to a rule change that allows the contents of well fracking ingredients to be kept secret, directly contradicting one of the requirements of the original Act. This "Dirty Secrets" amendment requires medical personnel to get permission from the driller before learning about the hazardous chemicals to which patients may have been exposed. Adopted by the Senate, this amendment was slightly modified in Committee, but eventually passed largely intact through the House. Thus, a weak rule implementing an already weak statute was allowed to become even weaker, threatening the basic health and rights of our citizens.

Good Bills That Died

SB 621 would have required a "Health Impact Statement" of new air and water quality rules.

SB 551 would have continued tax credits for residential solar energy.

SB 167 would have dedicated a portion of severance taxes to a "WV Future Fund" so that the depletion of non-renewable resources could be used to support long-term economic development. But it seems that protecting future generations was not something that the current Legislature would support.

SB 196 would have transferred management of portions of Coopers Rock State Forest from WV Division of Forestry to the WV Department of Natural Resources. Introduced as a result of timber mismanagement by WV-DOF, the bill died in committee.

Legislature, continued on p. 2

WV 12th State Calling for Amendment to Return Democracy to the People

Jim Sconyers

A coalition of good-government groups, including the West Virginia Sierra Club, successfully shepherded a resolution through both houses of the Legislature that asks Congress to pass a constitutional amendment to end the corrosive influence of corporate money in politics and restore constitutional rights to the people. The historic resolution passed with strong support in a Senate voice vote, following a 60-39 bipartisan vote in the House. This makes West Virginia the 12th state to call for this reform.

Momentum is building nationwide for a constitutional response to the flood of money from corporations and the ultra-wealthy that has inundated elections since the U.S. Supreme Court's disastrous 2010 ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*.

In West Virginia, the 2012 election brought special attention to the problem of money in politics, with the state launching a new pilot program for public funding in judicial races. Also, former Attorney General Darrell McGraw, who lost his re-election bid, was reportedly outspent by a margin of 6-to-1. This includes \$1.6 million that went toward negative ads financed by the Center for Individual Freedom, an outside group that does not disclose its donors.

Today's vote means that, since the *Citizens United* decision, 12 states and the District of Columbia have shown support for a constitutional amendment. About 500 local governments have called for an amendment, as have more than 125 members of Congress. President Barack Obama has expressed support for an amendment as well.

"I am pleased that the Senate joined the House in voting to send Congress this message calling for a constitutional amendment to correct the situation created by the *Citizens United* decision. Debate and free speech are crucial to our democracy, but a corporate interest, controlled by an anonymous select few, should not be able to spend an unlimited amount of money to spread its specific message," said House Speaker Rick Thompson (D-Wayne).

Former Secretary of State Edgar (Hike) Heiskell, III said, "Passage of the resolution is something that should make every West Virginian proud, because overturning the effects of *Citizens United* is a burning issue in the United States, and West Virginia is now in the forefront of this movement

nationally. We hope all remaining states will join ranks with us and continue the march to get a constitutional amendment passed that will restore to our elections process the integrity and accountability that was destroyed by the *Citizens United* decision." Heiskell previously served as chairman of the Committee on Election Reform of the National Association of Secretaries of State.

Leaders from some of the groups involved in the resolution campaign commented on the positive outcome in the Legislature.



Uncle Sam tries to school the "Supremes" about what a person is — and why a corporation isn't one!

photo by Jim Sconyers at Democracy Rally at Capitol, Feb 19

"In the wake of an election with astronomical spending records, this resolution by West Virginians sends a loud message that the people believe democracy is not for sale and constitutional

rights are for people, not corporations. This passage came as a result of a powerful alliance between West Virginia labor, environmental and community groups. The call to limit corporate spending in elections resonates with people across the political spectrum and across the country who care about a wide range of issues. West Virginia is the first state this year and the 12th state to call for an amendment. The tide in this country is turning," said Robert Weissman, president of Public Citizen.

"Spending in our democratic process should include disclosure and transparency rules, but that alone is not enough. Our democracy should not be for sale to the highest bidder, and constitutional rights should be preserved for individuals, not corporations. With another state added to the list of states calling for a constitutional amendment that will protect constitutional rights for people, we can hopefully apply more pressure on our federal representatives to listen to the wishes of citizens not only in West Virginia but throughout the country," said Elaine Harris, representative for Communications Workers of America.

The text of the resolution is available at: www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=hr9%20as%20amended.htm&yr=2013&sesstype=rs&i=9&houseorig=h&billtype=r

The national campaign to overturn the *Citizens United* decision continues.



Gas Wastewater Disposal Violations Overwhelm DEP

Beth Little

In WV most of the fluids from Marcellus shale gas drilling are disposed of by injecting them in underground injection (UIC) wells. The idea is that confining layers of rock keep the fluid from migrating upward and contaminating the water table. The injection pressure is supposed to be kept below the pressure it would take to fracture the rock around or above the fluid. UIC wells also have steel casings and cement layers to protect against waste entering the water table.

This protection is vital, because drilling wastewater contains heavy metals, toxic chemicals and radioactive materials.

In February 2010, Jamie Peterson, DEP staff in charge of the UIC program, told me there were 60–65 active UIC wells in the state. He was busy converting more wells to the UIC program.

ProPublica says there are “hidden risks” associated with pumping so much waste underground. Their analysis of 220,000 inspection records found that structural failure inside injection wells is “routine,” with one well-integrity violation written for every six wells between late 2007 and late 2010. That’s a total of 17,000 violations. They further report that 7,000 wells showed signs of leakage and that wells “are frequently operated in violation of safety regulations” and “under conditions that greatly increase the risk of fluid leakage and the threat of water contamination.”

If the situation at Danny Webb’s well in Lochgelly, WV, is any indication, the concern raised by ProPublica is certainly valid.

According to records obtained from the WV DEP under the Freedom of Information

Act, Danny Webb Construction (DWC) was originally issued a permit to operate a gas wastewater disposal well in 2002. Also constructed at the site were two open pits to be used only for settling out coal fines from wastewater produced by coal bed methane operations.

In 2004, the DEP received multiple complaints of a foul sulfurous odor coming from the site, which raised concerns that the odor was due to hydrogen sulfide, a poisonous and flammable gas. At low concentrations, exposure to hydrogen sulfide gas can cause irritation of the eyes and throat, shortness of breath, and nausea, while at higher concentrations exposure may be fatal. The DEP investigation found that the problem had been caused by a truck driver, who had mistakenly discharged fluids into one of the pits instead of a tank.

Based on ongoing odor complaints, DEP required Danny Webb Construction to: (1) cease transporting fluids from the company (Bobcat Oil and Gas) that had produced the waste giving rise to the problems, (2) cease using the open pit at the site until further notice, (3) empty the pit, wash the liner, and dispose of all rinsate and residue in a tank or down the disposal well, (4) complete construction of a fence around the pit at the disposal well site, (5) conduct training and instruction to all truck drivers and operators at the site to ensure proper assessment and handling of fluids.

According to the records, only #4 was timely completed. DWC continued to accept waste from Bobcat Oil and Gas for three more years, finally conducted worker training after four years, and continued using the pits.

In 2007, when DWC applied for a permit renewal, DEP received numerous comments from local residents expressing opposition to the renewal of the permit, including from the Fayette County Health Officer. While many concerns were raised by the residents, a significant number mentioned ongoing problems with noxious odors. In addition, the DEP received a communication from an Underground Storage Tank Inspector noting that Mr. Webb had provided the inspector with conflicting stories about the activities at the site. The UTS inspector found that Danny Webb was not managing his storage tanks properly, and he stated that Danny Webb “is not to be trusted. He is a loose cannon, doing as he jolly well pleases, right or wrong, regulations be damned.”

Despite these problems and concerns, DEP issued a renewed permit on October 25, 2007. Among other requirements, the permit mandated that the permittee: (1) provide for security at the injection facility, including providing a locked gate and instructing all drivers to close and lock it if a Webb employee is not at the facility (2) conduct training and instruction to all truck drivers and operators at the site to ensure proper assessment and handling of fluids, and (3) have pit fluids pumped into the tank battery and have the pits permanently backfilled and their use discontinued. Neighbors report that the gate is almost never even closed, and the pits are still there today. There are signs that the pits are leaking from the sides of the berms around the pits.

On May 8, 2008, DWC was cited for underground injection into another well at the

same site without a permit. On May 12, 2008, DWC was cited for failure to pump the fluid in the pits into tanks and close the pits within six months of permit issuance. On June 3, 2008, DEP personnel conducted another inspection and found that the other well onsite was still being operated. On September 23, 2010, DEP issued another notice of violation to DWC, this time because used oil not associated with produced fluids was observed within the pits. DWC was ordered to replace the pit liners. (In case you have noticed a disconnect regarding the attitude of the DEP toward the pits, Webb contested the legality of the DEP ordering the elimination of the pits, and the DEP conceded).

The EPA requires surprise inspections, at least once annually, with the taking of a sample for laboratory analysis. There is no evidence on the Office of Oil & Gas UIC database or in the FOIA documents that this has happened at the Webb site.

The permit for the Lochgelly well expired this past October, but waste is still actively being injected, while Webb has applied for a permit renewal. After hearing from neighbors and reading the FOIA information, the WV Sierra Club, WV Highlands Conservancy, Plateau Action Network, and National Resources Defense Council, as well as numerous citizens, have all written comment letters to the DEP protesting the granting of a permit renewal and requesting a public hearing.

The strong evidence that the DEP has turned a blind eye to a flagrant violator calls into question the ability of the DEP to properly manage the disposal of drilling waste in UIC wells in WV. Perhaps, as in the case with the 13,000 abandoned wells in WV, the DEP is understaffed and overwhelmed.

According to the EPA, there are now 759 Class II wells to dispose of brine and other related oil and gas fluids in WV. **There is no map showing the location of these UIC wells in WV.**

Legislature, continued from p. 1

HB 2802 and **HB 2210** would have mandated energy efficiency programs similar to what are already in effect in Ohio and Maryland. Neither bill got a hearing because the WV Coal Association said energy efficiency is “anti-coal.” Our Legislature has reached the point where the poor are now, in effect, giving welfare to the coal industry, instead of the other way around.

A Few Bright Spots

HB2626 updates building energy efficiency codes, one of the meager victories of the session.

HB2805 makes the Supreme Court Public Campaign Financing Act permanent, it had been scheduled to sunset.

A Few Bad Bills Died

SB 187 would have mandated a “Jobs Impact Statement” for any legislation, which was seen as an effort to gut pro-environment legislation. The bill became loaded down with amendments trying to soften the anti-environment, anti-health, and regulation aspects, ultimately leading many supporters to vote against it.

HB3072 would have provided substantial cuts in coal severance taxes. While the WV Coal Association claimed the bill was “revenue neutral” a careful analysis shows that it would have significant impacts to the WV budget.

HB3148 would have allowed ATV use on public lands, but fortunately died in committee.

Overall, this was a session in which the fossil fuel industry got almost everything they wanted. While most of America is moving toward a clean energy future, West Virginia is desperately clinging to the dirty fuels of the past.

Wellness and Water 2013 Conference on Health Impacts of Fossil Fuel Extraction June 29-30, 2013 Save the Dates!

Our second conference on Wellness and Water is planned for June 29-30 this year. We are expanding this event from last year’s half-day format to at least a full day, possibly a day and a half. We will have speakers and workshops related to both coal- and gas-affected communities. This year’s event will take place at West Virginia Wesleyan College, in Buckhannon. Overnight housing and meals will be available. For now, please save the date and plan to attend, and invite friends to attend, too.

More detailed information will be available soon. Please request to be added to our email list if you are not already on it.

Check for updates at:
www.marcellus-wv.com

Or, contact:
Chuck Wyrostok, WVSC Outreach Organizer
outreach@marcellus-wv.com
877-252-0257 (toll free)

POWER SHIFT 2013

October 18-21
Pittsburgh, PA

This fall, 10,000+ youth leaders will converge to fight for our future. Together we’ll build the movement to fight fracking, divest from fossil fuels, build a clean energy future, and stop the climate crisis.

Join us and be the first to get more details!

2013.wearepowershift.org

Scenes from the Mall
**Forward on
 Climate Rally
 in D.C.
 Feb. 17, 2013**



© Chuck Wyrstok



© Crystal Kendrick



Chuck Wyrstok; Terry Gonzales of Spencer



© Chuck Wyrstok

Crowd estimates for the biggest Climate Rally ever ranged from 35,000-50,000 on a frigid day in February this year. People came from all over the country to send a message to the President that protecting the environment is a major concern of the American people. The WV Chapter chartered two buses that transported nearly 100 participants from our area to join with the thousands. Groups quickly lost track of each other in the crowds, but the energy and passion of the throng helped spread a little bit of warmth.

Book Review

A Sea in Flames: The Deepwater Horizon Oil Blowout by Carl Safina

Richard Mier, Martinsburg

A good way to mark the third anniversary of the BP Gulf oil disaster would be to read Carl Safina's *A Sea in Flames: The Deepwater Horizon Oil Blowout*. Safina is a gifted storyteller and conservationist with the technical chops (PhD, founding president of the Blue Ocean Institute) and passion to do this right. He also writes in an engaging personal style veering frequently into lyricism inspired by his love of the natural world. He is often funny.

This story is told in real time with him on the ground, in the air, and on the water as events unravel, almost from the very beginning. His snarky comments early on reflect the just anger of a committed and concerned environmentalist while chaos and oil spread, excuses abound and not much gets accomplished. The numbers, though you've seen 'em before, continue to stagger: 18,360 feet from sea surface to well bottom, 60,000 barrels of oil a day for 86 days, 20 times the volume from the *Exxon Valdez*, up to 70,000 gallons of dispersants used daily, 11 dead from the explosion, at least several others from suicide.

These numbers you can get anywhere. And while I'm sure the technical mishaps, mistakes in judgment, corporate greed, and bureaucratic dithering can be obtained from most of the other 30-odd books about the disaster, Safina does a fine job with this as well. What he does best, however, is to make this a story about people grievously affected as well as an environment assaulted. He puts this whole mess within a bigger and more important mess which has been the degradation of the Gulf of Mexico occurring over a span of many years, resulting in the annual "dead zone" at the mouth of the Mississippi Delta most recently measuring upwards of 8,000 square miles. "Getting the oil," he writes, "has destroyed far more of the Mississippi River Delta's world-class wetlands than the blowout ever will."

His pique ebbs into thoughtfulness toward the end. It's easiest to blame BP, Transocean and Halliburton but more useful to realize that "we are all victims, all perpetrators." Better to recognize that "the real fire-breathing dragon, real dangerous demon, lurking on the surface all along, can be located in the mirror." Like all of us, at first he worried that "the blowout would ruin the Gulf's marshes and beaches and fisheries and wildlife for years to come." By the time he gets to page 272 he worries, "What if it doesn't?" What if we decide that "the worst blowout ever is simply not so bad?"

Safina himself describes this book as a chronicle of pain and hope. It tells the story but also asks the question: what are we doing risking our future as well as our present, drilling for oil 18,000 feet below the surface of the ocean? An important question and a thoughtful and compelling book.

Tell PSC: Don't Subsidize Appalachian Power Co. – Energy Efficiency Better

Carol Nix

If you are an Appalachian Power customer, you saw your electric rates increase 68 percent between 2000 and 2011. If that doesn't make you gasp, just wait — there are plans afoot to squeeze even more money out of you.

Appalachian Power customers are being asked to take over the care and feeding of a couple of power plants that have become white elephants for their stockholders. The Public Service Commission (PSC) is going to consider the transfer of a portion of the John Amos and Mitchell power stations from Ohio consumers to West Virginians.

Let's help the PSC to say "NO"

The cost of these plants will be enormous — over \$1billion — and their value is actually grossly overstated. The company says that the reason for this transfer is a projected increase in electricity consumption of about 1.5 percent (though the U.S. Energy Information Agency predicts 0.7 percent). The utility is asking for a surcharge on our electric bills to cover the cost of these plants, which would initially be at least 6 percent, but could go much higher as the plants age,

fuel costs increase relative to gas, and pollution control becomes more expensive.

The real reason they are giving us these white elephants is that it's convenient to dump noncompetitive coal on WV customers just to rake in more revenue. Because West Virginia utilities are regulated — utilities here are guaranteed a reasonable profit over and above their costs. That's fair for them, but this transfer isn't fair to us.

We need to tell the PSC that West Virginians can't afford this con job. In our state 19 percent of the population is over 65. One-third of us make less than \$25,000. How can we absorb these power plant costs?

At a public forum in Clarksburg on April 4, consumer advocate Byron Harris stated, "This case will involve a difference in vision."

The vision of the WV Sierra Club and its allies is movement towards a more energy-efficient state. A study by Optimal Energy found that West Virginia was nearly last in the nation in offering state energy-efficiency programs. Demand-side management for businesses, load control devices for air conditioners, programmable thermostats, automated light switches, cogeneration (recycling industrial waste heat for electricity

generation) — these and other initiatives can meet demand at less than half the cost. Shouldn't the Public Service Commission consider the cheapest way to serve the customer?

TAKE ACTION

"The commissioners do take our opinions into account," said Harris. So please take a few minutes to write a letter of protest against the transfers — we need all our voices to be heard right now.

Some points to mention:

- 27 other states demand that their utilities implement energy efficiency
- Energy efficiency means more jobs right here — as many as 19,000
- Spending money to reduce our demand is a far cheaper alternative
- West Virginians deserve 21st century solutions to our electric needs

Send comments to the Public Service Commission at:

www.psc.state.wv.us/scripts/onlinecomments/default.cfm

Or, if you prefer, write to PSC, 201 Brooks St, Charleston, WV 25301

MON GROUP MEETINGS

Saturday, May 4, all day Bird Day at Coopers Rock SF

Members are invited to join the Avian Conservation Center of Appalachia as they host the 2nd annual Morgantown Migratory Bird Day at Coopers Rock State Forest. The event will consist of morning bird walks (7am) lead by LeJay Graffious and Terry Bronson. Other activities will begin around 10am at the pavilion (located near Coopers Rock overlook). Activities will include live bird presentations, kids' stories and hikes, a scavenger hunt, raffles, and an opportunity to make your own bird feeder. Other organizations and agencies will have tables at the pavilion, including the Mon Group of the Sierra Club, Coopers Rock Foundation, Friends of Deckers Creek, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, and many others.

For more info, contact Doug Gilbert, 681-285-9867, doug@deckerscreek.org

Thursday, June 13, 6:30-9pm Annual Ice Cream Social at Coopers Rock SF

This will be year 28 for our annual homemade ice cream and potluck picnic. Come to Shelter 1 near the Overlook at Coopers Rock. Bring some food to share, meet some fun people, and learn more about what Sierra Club is and does. Families and non-members are all welcome. Vote for this year's ice cream flavor. I'm leaning toward Pina Colada!

For more info, or to vote, send a text or email to Candice Elliott, 304-319-2245, celliot2@comcast.net

Spring Events at WV Botanic Garden

Barb Howe

The West Virginia Botanic Garden invites Sierra Club members to our programs. On **Sunday, May 5, at 2:00pm**, Gabe Strain will lead a Wetlands and Amphibians Walk. Be prepared to get your shoes muddy. On **Saturday, June 8, at 9:30am**, Cindy Huebner will lead a walk on Native Trees and Shrubs. Both walks are free and open to the public. Meet in the lower parking lot of the Botanic Garden at 1061 Tyrone Road, Morgantown.

On **Saturday, May 11**, we are holding a plant sale at from 10:00am to 3:00pm. Come and purchase plants for your garden while supporting ours! We will have a wide selection of plants to choose from and experts to provide advice. WVBG Members will have first pick from 10:00 to 11:00am along with their 10 percent discount. We accept cash

and checks only at this time. If you are not a member, you can join at this event.

We are also holding a Nature Camp for children, ages 7-10, from **June 10 to 14**.

For more information about the Botanic Garden and camp, please go to www.wvbg.org or call Erin Smaldone at 304-216-8704.

Perspectives on Outings — Russ Flowers, Outings Chair

Gone to the Birds — I know I have!

Most people are happy that winter is finally over. Normally I'm one of those people; however, this year I am a little sad to see it go. I enjoy the outdoors, especially in the spring and fall, and I normally hibernate like a bear in the winter. This winter was different. After taking some birding classes with the WV Master Naturalist Program and attending some birding festivals last year, I began to get addicted to birding. Instead of watching TV, my wife and I observed birds in our back yard at our feeders and participated in bird counts. In addition, we went on lots of bird walks during the winter.

Living along the Ohio River, we are fortunate that we have thousands of birds migrating here from further north, especially water fowl. Among some of the most beautiful species we have observed are the Hooded Merganser, Canvasback, Redhead ducks and of course Wood and Mallard ducks. I was introduced to several species by joining the local birding club, and reintroduced to some old familiars like the Belted Kingfisher, Great Blue Heron, Red-tailed Hawks, etc.

While some would regard winter's lack of foliage on hardwood trees an eyesore, I have found it beneficial to spotting birds, especially birds of prey. To my amazement, there are bald eagles nesting in our area. I have been fortunate to see over 15 bald eagles (including juveniles) in my area over this winter. That being said, I'm a bit sad to see winter go.

The sadness is short lived, however, because spring brings a whole new cycle of birding onto the horizon. Birds will be migrating by the thousands. It will be exciting to see the various Warblers and Crossbills visiting our area. In addition to viewing, sometimes hearing the birds is just as invigorating. I was on an American Woodcock outing a few evenings ago and we heard the elusive bird, but never saw one. Our outing was rewarded with a special visit from a Long-eared Owl flying right over our heads. Moments like that continue to feed this new addiction.

The great thing about this new passion is that I can combine it with my other love — hiking. While on the trail, I will not only observe the trees, wildflowers, and scenery, I will also look and listen for the birds and songs I am learning. I'm looking forward to what I may see in the trees and fields along many of the state's trails in the coming months.

I challenge you to look for ways to enjoy your passion for the outdoors. Please take a look at one of our many outings. They are created for all skill levels, and we offer something for lots of different interest areas (hiking, biking, canoeing, nature walks, workshops, service projects, etc.). The outings are a great way to meet up with old friends, meet new ones and to fellowship with like-minded people. Our outings are open to members and non-members, so invite your friends to join you.

If you are interested in participating in an outing or interested in becoming an outings leader, please feel free to contact me or one of the many outstanding outings leaders. Take to the Outdoors!

Maryland Chapter Outings

Our neighboring chapter to the east has an active outings program, with many trips coming into West Virginia or western Maryland. These outings, by highly experienced leaders, range from easy to strenuous, and are open to everyone. Join an outing by checking out their calendar at maryland.sierraclub.org

Allegheny Group Outings

Sierra Club members in the Pittsburgh area belong to the Allegheny Group. They have a moderately active outings program as well as links to other local outdoor activities. Visit their website for an outings calendar and more details at alleghenysc.org

Potomac Region Outings (PRO)

This is an activity section of the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter, with an extensive outings program run by leaders who live in and around the Washington, D.C., area. A calendar of activities, information and updates can be found on their website at www.sierrapotomac.org

West Virginia Chapter Outings

For updated listings of outings sponsored by the West Virginia Chapter, check our Chapter website at westvirginia.sierraclub.org

Please contact the Editor for submission guidelines or advertising rates.

Contributions to the newsletter may be sent to the Editor at

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**Deadline for
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June 6**

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Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
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Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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Upcoming Outings — Spring / Summer

Abbreviations Used

AMC	Appalachian Mountain Club
AT	Appalachian Trail
GWNF	George Washington National Forest
JNF	Jefferson National Forest
MG	Monongahela Group
MNF	Monongahela National Forest
NPS	National Park Service
NRA	National Recreation Area
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
PFD	Personal Flotation Device (lifejacket)
SF	State Forest
SP	State Park
SNP	Shenandoah National Park

Sat, May 4

East Fork Trail of Greenbrier River

rated easy to moderate — The scenic East Fork Trail follows the East Fork of the Greenbrier River through hemlock stands, pine plantations, and past many small waterfalls, extending 8 miles from the Island Campground in Thornwood to Pig's Ear Road (Forest Service Road 254) on Elk Mountain. This will be a shuttle hike. Most of the trail is level with a couple of moderate inclines: some sections of the trail are rocky with tree roots. Hike is okay for beginners, limit: 10 hikers. We will have two leaders, Point and Sweep, because people will want to stop at various places to take pictures, etc. Leader has knowledge of the area. Sturdy footwear suggested. Participants should bring rain gear, snacks, and water. Conservation Topic: Leave No Trace. Meet at 10AM at the Island Campground on Rt. 28 near Thornwood, WV, in the Monongahela National Forest in Pocahontas County. Please pre-register with leader.

Leader: Brent Carminati, 304-567-2865, brentcar1@frontiernet.net

Nearest town: Thornwood, WV

Sat, May 4

Quebec Run Wild Area

rated moderate — Join us on this 6-mile loop hike just north of Morgantown in the heavily forested Quebec Run Wild Area in Pennsylvania. Rated moderate difficulty for areas of steep incline and decline and a stream crossing. Trip length approximately 4-5 hours. Participants should have previous hiking experience and be able to hike 1.5-2 mph in variable terrain. Bring rain gear, lunch and water. Car-pool from Cheat Lake Exit off I-68. Car-pooling is a private arrangement among the participants and Sierra Club assumes no liability. Please pre-register with the leader.

Leader: Ann Devine-King, 304-594-2636, atdtking@gmail.com.

Nearest town: Bruceton Mills, WV

Web info: www.dcnr.state.pa.us/ucmprd1/groups/public/.../dcnr_002563.pdf

Sat, May 18

Buck Hollow and Mary's Rock, SNP Loop

rated strenuous — This is a 9 mile loop beginning on Route 211 with a 2400 foot elevation gain, so plan on this 5-hour hike to include two very long steep climbs as well as a couple of stream crossings. Mary's Rock affords a beautiful view overlooking the Shenandoah Valley. Hopefully the mountain laurel will be blooming. Rated strenuous due to the uphill climbs. Meet at the Front Royal, VA, Walmart and please pre-register with trip leader.

Leader: Pam Peitz, 240-818-6554, pspeitz@hotmail.com.

Nearest town: Flint Hill, VA

Web info: www.nps.gov/shen

Sat, May 25

Laurel Fork Special Management Area

rated easy to moderate — Hike Bucks Run and Locust Spring Run Trails in the Laurel Fork Special Management Area. These trails have been upgraded in the past two years. This 6-mile loop trail follows old railroad grades along two mountain

streams with mini waterfalls and cascades; elevation changes about 700 feet. Most of the trail is easy with a few small creek crossings, some short rocky areas of the trail, and one short switchback elevation drop on part of the trail. Hike is okay for beginners, limit: 10 hikers. We will have two leaders, Point and Sweep, because people will want to stop at various places to take pictures, etc. Leader has knowledge of the area. Sturdy footwear suggested. Participants should bring rain gear, lunch and water.

Conservation Topic: Water-shed area. Meet at 10 AM at the Locust Springs Picnic Area off Rt. 28 at Pocahontas/Pendleton County lines. Please pre-register with leader.

Leader: Brent Carminati 304-567-2865 or brentcar1@frontiernet.net

Nearest town: Circleville, WV

Sat, Jun 1

Sleepy Creek Wilderness Area Loop Hike

rated moderate — This 7-mile loop starts at the Wood's Resort and goes to Sleepy Creek Lake and back. This involves several stream crossings and you will need to bring water shoes as well as mosquito repellent. Meet up at the Wood's Resort Golf Club parking lot. Please pre-register with trip leader.

Leader: Pam Peitz, 240-818-6554, pspeitz@hotmail.com.

Nearest town: Hedgesville, WV

Web info: wv.dnr.gov/hunting.wma.shtm

Sat, Jun 8

Cheat River Leisure Float/Paddle

rated easy — We put in at Holly Meadow in Tucker County for a leisurely float-and-paddle down the Cheat River to St. George. Enjoy the riverine scenery of forest, farm fields, summer wildflowers, possibly wildlife (bald eagle last year) and more with the mountains as a backdrop. The trip is generally flatwater, with a few riffles providing brief excitement here and there. Expect to spend about 4 hours on the river. It is suitable for beginners. Boat rentals are available. Kayaks and sit-on-tops are recommended for their shallow draft. The outing depends on warm weather and adequate water level. Personal Flotation devices (lifejackets) are required on Sierra Club watercraft outings. Optional late lunch/snack at local Parsons bistro afterwards. Rain or high wind cancels. Please pre-register with leader.

Leader: Jim Sconyers, 304-698-9628, jimscon@gmail.com.

Nearest towns: St. George & Parsons, WV

Sat, Jun 8

Trees & Soils Workshop

not rated — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on two part workshop on Trees and Soils at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshop is free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader, seating is limited. Bring bag lunch (fridge & microwave available). Workshop is from 8:30AM to 4:30PM. Meet at Refuge Headquarters in Williamstown at 8:30AM. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: www.fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands

Sat, Jun 22

Evening Bike Ride: Morgantown Riverfront

rated moderate — Join us for a moderate bike ride along the Morgantown Riverfront. Length of bike ride will depend on the desires of the group, but expect a ride of about 15-20 miles. Bring along some water, don't forget your helmet, and make sure your tires are properly inflated. Contact Leader for Start Time & Rendezvous Location.

Leader: Aaron Vedock, 540-805-0019, amvedock@hotmail.com

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV.

Sun, Jun 16

Upper Blackwater River Leisure Float/Paddle

rated easy — Join us for a leisurely float-and-paddle up the Upper Blackwater and back down. Enjoy lush streamside scenery as we wind our way through high banks, glades, and forest into Canaan Valley. The trip is generally flatwater and very scenic; expect to spend about 4 hours on the river. It is suitable for beginners. Kayaks and sit-on-tops are recommended for their shallow draft. The outing depends on warm weather and adequate water level. Personal Flotation devices (lifejackets) are required on Sierra Club watercraft outings. Optional late lunch/snack at local Davis bistro afterwards. Rain or high wind cancels. Please pre-register with leader.

Leader: Jim Sconyers, 304-698-9628, jimscon@gmail.com

Nearest town: Davis, WV

Sat, Jun 29

Service Outing — Coopers Rock SF

rated moderate — This will be the summer trail clean-up on our "adopted" Intermediate Cross Country Ski Trail and loop for 1.25 miles at Coopers Rock State Forest. Volunteers seeking community service are encouraged to participate. Much of the work will be cutting back vegetation, cleaning out and restoring drainage ditches/culverts and general trail clearing. The work is meant to be rewarding and at a pace to enjoy each other's company; however, some moderate-intensity work will be necessary, using shovels, rakes, pruners, and moving reasonably sized rocks. Anything requiring power tools or heavy lifting is deferred to the Forest Superintendent. Volunteers should wear sturdy boots and work gloves and carry water, snacks. Contact leader for more details.

Leader: Ann Devine-King, 304-594-2636, atdtking@gmail.com

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: www.coopersrockstateforest.com; coopersrock.org; wvstateparks.com/community/adopt.htm

Sat, Jul 13

Wildlife Habitat Improvement & General Ecology Workshop

not rated — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop on Wildlife Habitat Improvement & General Ecology at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshop is free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader, seating is limited. Bring bag lunch (fridge & microwave available). Workshop is from 8:30AM to 4:30PM. Meet at Refuge Headquarters in Williamstown at 8:30AM. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: www.fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands

Sun, Sep 8

Dolly Sods North Day Hike

rated moderate — Dolly Sods North was added to the Dolly Sods Wilderness in 2009. Come and see why! We'll explore the forest, savanna, streams, and the natural and human history. Dolly Sods North is a high alpine landscape with spectacular scenery, encompassing the headwaters of Red Creek. Our trail distance is approximately 8 miles. Grades are generally moderate, and this hike rates as leisure for difficulty and moderate for length. We will keep a leisurely pace with numerous stops to "smell the roses." Our route focuses on the more northerly trails in the upper parts of the headlands. Day-hiking gear is needed, along with plenty of water, sunscreen, and weather protection. Please pre-register with leader.

Leader: Jim Sconyers, 304-698-9628, jimscon@gmail.com.

Nearest town: Harman, WV



Sierra Club Liability Policies For Chapter Outings

Sierra Club outings are open to everyone, members and non-members alike. Each outing is intended to be a wholesome, safe, and enjoyable experience in the outdoors. Participants must have suitable clothing, gear, and stamina, and are encouraged to select activities that match their individual abilities for outdoor adventures.

The Club offers a variety of outings from "easy" to "moderate" to "strenuous" that suit all activity levels. The difficulty of each outing is clearly designated in the announcement. Reservations are generally not required unless noted, but the outing leader may be contacted in advance for questions about the terrain, the difficulty and recommended gear.

Activities are normally held "rain or shine," but may be postponed at the leader's discretion for safety reasons in the event of inclement weather. Participants are reminded that all outdoor activities carry a degree of risk, and some take place in locations where professional emergency medical aid may be two or more hours away. People with health concerns should consult a physician to determine the advisability of participating in these or similar activities. The leader is responsible for the safety of all participants, and has the final authority to decide whether or not an individual may participate on a specific outing. Sierra Club safety policy requires that helmets be worn on bicycling outings, and a personal flotation device (PFD) be worn when using personal watercraft such as kayaks or canoes.

Unless noted in the announcement, Club outings are intended for adults. Children and

dogs are not normally permitted, unless an outing is so designated. Minors (under 18 years of age) must be accompanied by a parent or a legal guardian, or they must have both 1) a signed permission slip, and 2) the leader's prior consent to participate in the Club outing. Sierra Club outings officially begin and end at the trailhead.

Travel to the official starting point and back, even from an advertised meeting place, is the sole responsibility of each participant. While the Club encourages car-pooling, such arrangements are strictly between the riders and the drivers, and are not a part of the outing. Participants assume full responsibility and liability for all risks associated with such travel.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver, which can be viewed on the web at www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms or by calling 415-977-5630.

The Sierra Club does not charge for chapter outings, although payment of park entrance fees, a share of campsite rental costs, permit fees, equipment rental charges, etc. may be required from the participants. The Sierra Club practices "leave-no-trace" trail techniques, including hiking and camping on durable surfaces, minimizing campfire impacts, packing out all trash, respecting wildlife, being considerate of other visitors, and leaving the environment as it was found.

The Sierra Club's California Seller of Travel identification number is CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.



Sierra Club

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Charleston, WV 25305

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email: governor@wv.gov

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email to WV Legislature:
cglagola@mail.wvnet.edu
(Put name of recipient under subject)

Messages for legislators can be left at:
1-877-565-3447 or 304-347-4836

Mail address:
Member, WV Senate or
House of Delegates

Bldg 1
State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

website: www.legis.state.wv.us
has contact information for all state
legislators



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Preserve the Future

Not everyone can make a large gift to protect the environment during their lifetime, but you can preserve the environment for generations to come by remembering Sierra Club in your will. There are many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter.

For more information and confidential assistance, contact:

**Sierra Club
Gift Planning Program**
85 Second St, Second Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
gift.planning@sierraclub.org • (800) 932-4270

For planned giving in West Virginia, contact Paul Wilson at 304-725-4360

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